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ASSASSIN'S CREED

DEC '15
COVER A



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ASSASSIN'S CREED®

+ TRIAL BY FIRE

In an instant, Charlotte de la Cruz had her normal, boring, life turned upside down when the Assassins Xavier Chen and Galina Voronina plucked her out of her San Diego apartment...

And dropped her into the Animus, and in Salem, 1692. On the eve of the infamous Witch Trials.

With no time to find her feet, Charlotte dives into the memories of her cantankerous ancestor, the Master Assassin, Tom Stoddard, looking for the secret that will save the Assassin Brotherhood ...

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Salem, 1692.

DING DING DING

THE CALM
BEFORE
THE STORM.

I REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME
I WITNESSED A SUN SUCH AS THIS.
A BOY ON HIS FIRST VOYAGE.
BEING ALONE SCARED ME GREATLY.


HOW
THINGS
CHANGE.

THIS BOOK WAS ALL
I HAD. I READ AND
RE-READ IT. BROUGHT
ME SOLACE.

I AM
SURE MOST
PEOPLE
WOULD
CONSIDER
IT ODD...

...AS IT'S MAINLY
A STORY ABOUT
SINNERS, THE
DEVIL AND HELL.

FITTING,
I PRESUME...



...FOR ONE
WHO HAS KILLED
SO MANY.

I'VE LOST
COUNT OF
THE NUMBER OF
MISSIONS SINCE.

SO MANY PLACES.
SO MANY TEMPLARS.
SO MANY ARTIFACTS.

BUT ONE
NEVER FORGETS
THEIR FIRST.

YEAH, THIS IS MY ANCESTOR
TOM STODDARD.
ASSASSIN, RECLUSE, NIHILIST.
FAMILY PRIDE ALL THE WAY.

YOU HERE
FOR EMPLOY,
GOODMAN?

AND HERE
BEGINS THE
GAME...

HELLO,
GOOD MEN.
A FINE MORNING
IT IS.





...THE WRONG
ANSWER.



GURGG



THUNK

I'LL GIVE
HIM ONE
THING, THOUGH:
GUY KNOWS
HOW TO KILL.





==GKKKK==



"FOREST DARK."
HOW ONE TRAVELS
TO ANDOVER. WE MUST
TRAVEL THROUGH A
FOREST DARK.

THOSE
ARE THE
WORDS,
YES?

TOM
STODDARD,
I PRESUME? I'M
JENNIFER QUERRY,
YOUR CONTACT
IN SALEM.

IT IS AN
HONOR TO
MEET YOU. I HAVE
WORKED HARD
TO --

NOT HARD ENOUGH. THOSE MEN
COULD ONLY HAVE LEARNED
MY WATCHWORDS FROM YOU.
I CANNOT WORK WITH
PEOPLE WHO --

I... I
SAVED YOUR
LIFE.

ONLY
AFTER YOU
PUT IT IN
DANGER.

I SWEAR
TO YOU, THE
WORDS DID
NOT COME
FROM ME.
I'VE SPENT
WEEKS SCOUTING
SALEM FOR YOU.
I HAVE BEEN
TRAINED TO HELP.

I HAVE
IDEAS ON WHERE
THE ARTIFACT CAN
BE FOUND.

YOU'LL HAVE
TO PROVE IT.
AFTER WE CLEAN UP
YOUR MESS.



I DON'T NEED THIS,
AN AMATEUR GUIDING ME.

SHE IS KEEPING
UP, THOUGH.

STILL, CLIMBING IS ONE THING.
SURVIVING IS ANOTHER.

WELCOME TO
SALEM TOWN.

LOOK AT
A PERSON IN THE
WRONG MANNER AND
ONE WILL BE ACCUSED
OF BEING A WITCH OR
WIZARD, ARRESTED,
TORTURED AND
KILLED.

CHARMING.

OKAY, JENNIFER
MUST BE JOSEPH'S
ANCESTOR. TOM BETTER
KEEP HER AROUND SO
I CAN FIND OUT IF SHE
KNOWS WHERE THE PIECE
OF EDEN WINDS UP.

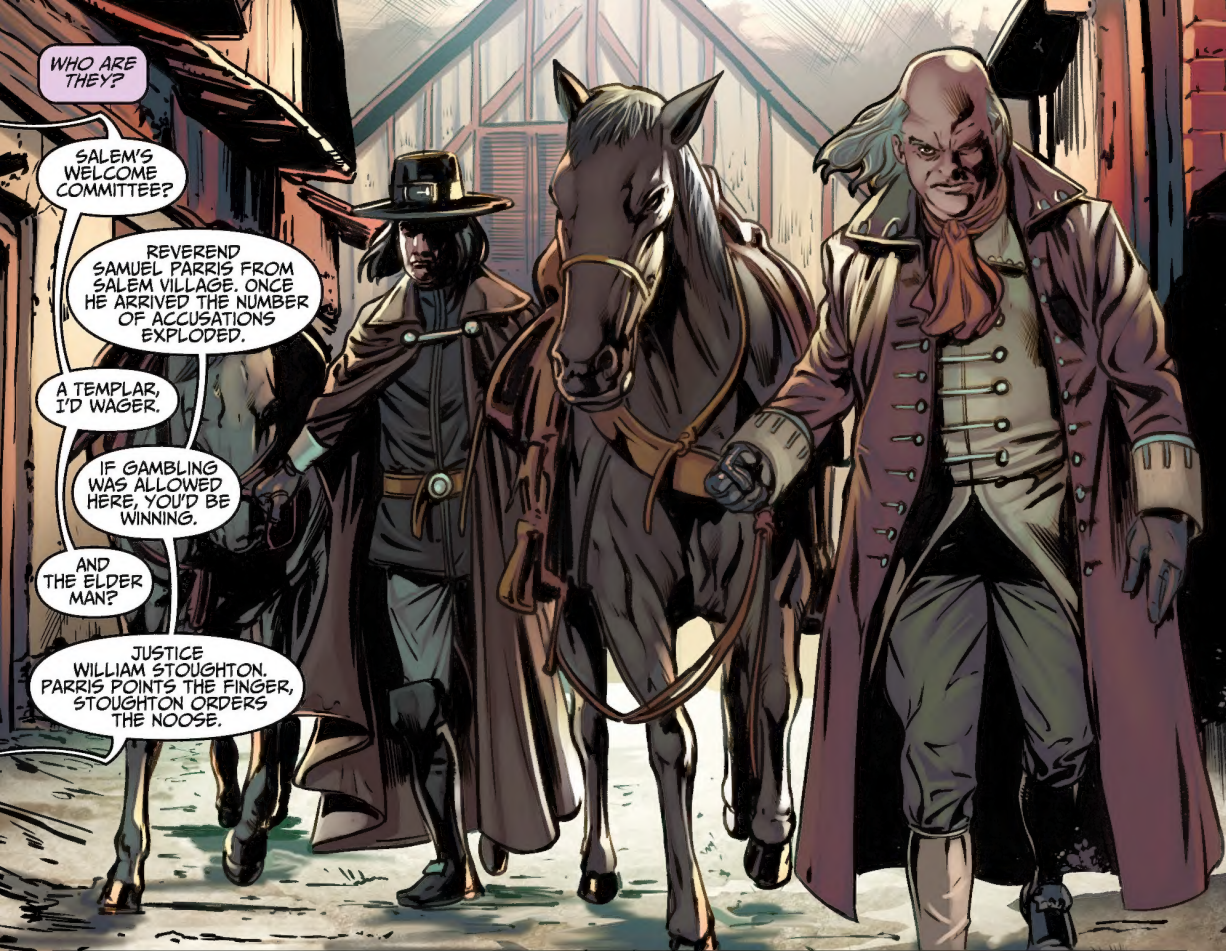
THE MADNESS
BEGAN IN JANUARY.
A YOUNG GIRL CAME
DOWN WITH AN ILLNESS
THE DOCTOR COULD
NOT EXPLAIN.

THEN OTHER
GIRLS STARTED TO ACT
ODDLY. LIKE THE FIRST, THEY
WERE STRUCK BY SEIZURES,
WHICH IN ALL PROSPECT
WERE FAKED.

THE CHURCH
BELIEVED THE ILLNESSES
WERE THE DOING OF THE DEVIL.
HYSTERIA CONSUMED ALL AND
SOON NEIGHBOR ACCUSED
NEIGHBOR OF WITCHCRAFT.
MOST OF IT TO SETTLE
OLD GRIPES AND
GRUDGES.

WHAT'S
THE REAL
STORY?





WHO ARE THEY?

SALEM'S WELCOME COMMITTEE?

REVEREND SAMUEL PARRIS FROM SALEM VILLAGE. ONCE HE ARRIVED THE NUMBER OF ACCUSATIONS EXPLODED.

A TEMPLAR, I'D WAGER.

IF GAMBLING WAS ALLOWED HERE, YOU'D BE WINNING.

AND THE ELDER MAN?

JUSTICE WILLIAM STOUGHTON. PARRIS POINTS THE FINGER, STOUGHTON ORDERS THE NOOSE.



... BUT THE BODIES AT THE DOCK?



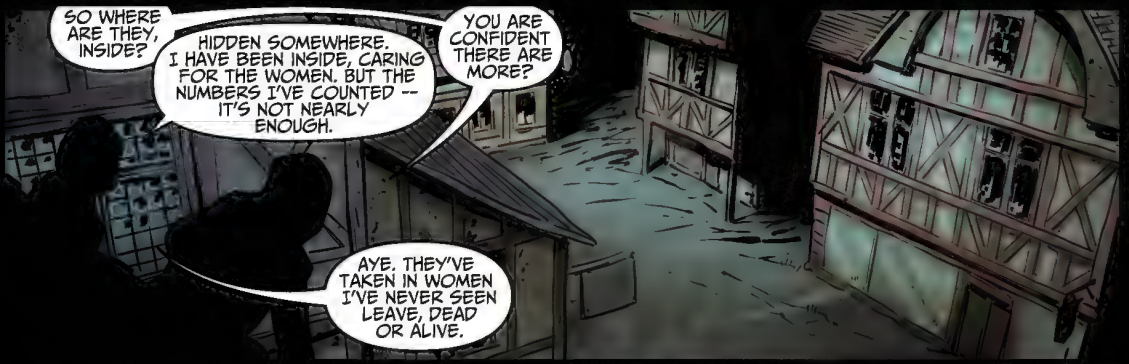
I ASSURE YOU: IT'S UNDER CONTROL. THE GUARDS HAVE BEEN DOUBLED.

NOW COME, LET'S MAKE OUR ROUNDS.



MORE GUARDS? WELL DONE, NURSE. OUR JOB HAS BEEN MADE HARDER, AGAIN. YOU DO KNOW THE LOCATION OF THE GIRLS, I SURMISE?

GEEZ, LAY OFF, WILL YOU? DIDN'T YOU HEAR? IT'S HER FIRST FREAKIN' MISSION.



SO WHERE ARE THEY, INSIDE?

HIDDEN SOMEWHERE. I HAVE BEEN INSIDE, CARING FOR THE WOMEN. BUT THE NUMBERS I'VE COUNTED -- IT'S NOT NEARLY ENOUGH.

YOU ARE CONFIDENT THERE ARE MORE?

AYE. THEY'VE TAKEN IN WOMEN I'VE NEVER SEEN LEAVE, DEAD OR ALIVE.



THEY COULD EASILY HAVE BEEN BROUGHT OUT ANOTHER WAY, OR AT A TIME YOU WEREN'T WATCHING.



PARRIS KNOWS WE'RE HERE. THIS COULD BE A TRAP, OR A DECOY.



NO. IT'S NO DECOY. I'VE DEDICATED THE LAST MONTH OF MY LIFE TO THIS.

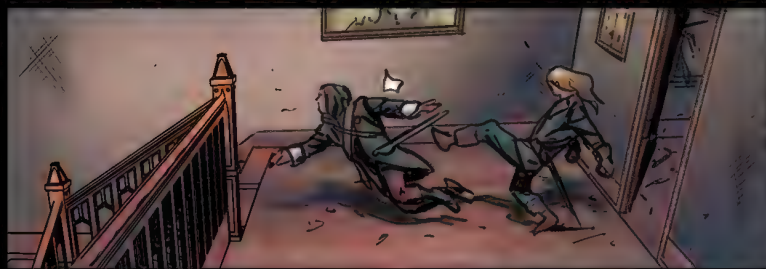
I KNOW THEY ARE HERE.



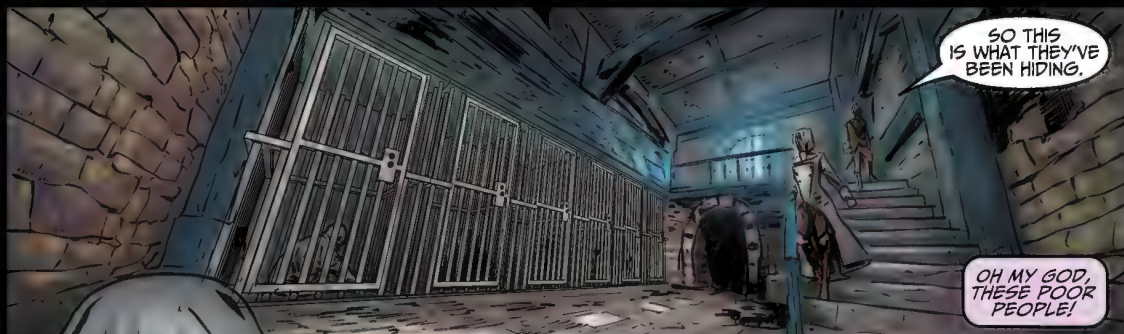
IF YOU DO SO PROFESS, NURSE.

I'LL FIND OUT WHAT THEY'RE HIDING.









SO THIS IS WHAT THEY'VE BEEN HIDING.

OH MY GOD, THESE POOR PEOPLE!



PLEASE... HELP US...



PLEASE... THEY KEEP US TRAPPED.

KEEP YOUR MIND ON OUR GOAL, NURSE.

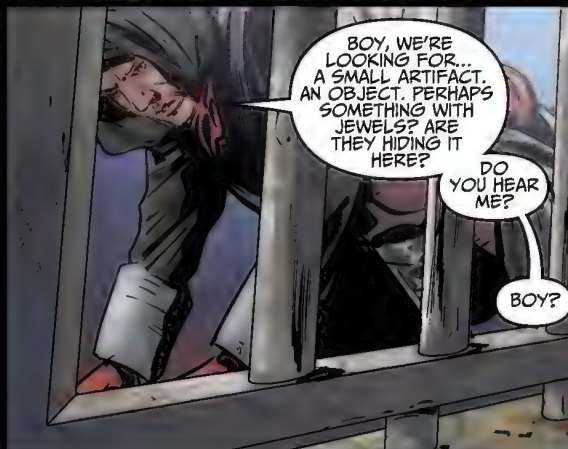
YOU UNBELIEVABLE ASSHOLE!



WE CANNOT LEAVE THEM!

LOOK AT ME. THE SOONER WE FIND THE PIECE OF EDEN AND TAKE IT OUT OF HERE, THE SOONER THE TEMPLARS WILL LEAVE SALEM.

UNTIL THEN, THEY WILL CONTINUE THIS.



BOY, WE'RE LOOKING FOR... A SMALL ARTIFACT. AN OBJECT. PERHAPS SOMETHING WITH JEWELS? ARE THEY HIDING IT HERE?

DO YOU HEAR ME?

BOY?



HE CANNOT SPEAK. HE'S MUTE.



DAVID DOES NOT HAVE ANY KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT YOU SEEK.

BUT I DO. IF YOU HELP ME, GOODMAN, I CAN BRING YOU TO IT.

YOU CAN'T HELP ME, LITTLE GIRL.



YOU WANT THE PIECE OF EDEN, DO YOU NOT?



I CAN GET IT FOR YOU, GOODMAN. I TRULY CAN.

I'LL SHOW YOU.



WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

DOROTHY. DOROTHY OSBORNE.

IF YOU'RE LYING TO ME, DOROTHY, YOU'LL WISH YOU'D NEVER SPOKEN A WORD.



CRACK



THERE. GO THERE.





MAY THE FATHER OF UNDERSTANDING GUIDE HIM.

A PITY. A GOOD MAN, HE WAS. BUT HIS DEATH WAS IN THE NAME OF A RIGHTEOUS CAUSE.



THIS IS RECKLESS, REVEREND. WE ARE CLOSE TO FINDING WHAT WE SEEK YET YOU WELCOME A STRANGER INTO OUR MIDST.

DO YOU DOUBT ME, MASTER STOUGHTON? HAVE YOU GROWN WEAK SO CLOSE TO OUR GOAL?

CLOSE? THOSE PEOPLE ARE NOT --

A SMALL PRICE TO PAY FOR THE PIECE OF EDEN.

THAT MAN DOWN THERE IS A LEGEND OF THE BROTHERHOOD. AN ELITE TRACKER. I AM MERELY ALLOWING HIM TO DO OUR WORK.



WE CANNOT --

I DO SEE YOUR WISDOM, THOUGH. IT IS TIME TO END THE MOUSE'S SCURRY.

REVEREND? WHAT HARM DO YOU WISH TO INFLICT? THE PEOPLE HERE WILL NOT CONDONE --



THE PEOPLE? THE PEOPLE? WHY, AN EXCELLENT NOTION, MASTER STOUGHTON.

WHY ENDANGER TEMPLAR BLOOD WHEN WE HAVE SO MANY HERE THAT WOULD SEE KILLING HIM AS GOD'S WORK?

OUR ORDER IS NOT BUILT ON BLOOD. I HAVE TOLERATED THE TORMENTS YOU PUT THE SUPPOSED WITCHES THROUGH, BUT I WILL NOT LET YOU --

IT IS TOO LATE, MASTER STOUGHTON.



CITIZENS OF SALEM!

FOR MONTHS I HAVE WARNED YOU OF THE DEVIL'S HANDIWORK. FOR MONTHS HE HAS LAY ATTACKS UPON OUR WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

BUT ON THIS FINE EVENING HE HAS VISITED US! IN THE FLESH! BELOW THIS VERY BUILDING! TO STEAL THE SOULS OF THOSE HE HAS INFECTED WITH HIS WICKEDNESS!

GOOD CHRISTIAN FELLOWS, SHALL WE LET THE DEVIL TAKE OUR CHILDREN, OUR MOTHERS AND FATHERS?

NO!

WE'LL NOT LET HIM BRING FURTHER MADNESS TO US!



BRING HIM TO ME, AND THE WOMAN WHO AIDS HIM. YOU SHALL KNOW THEM AS THEY SHELTER THEIR FACES IN HOODS, AFRAID OF THE LIGHT OF GOD!

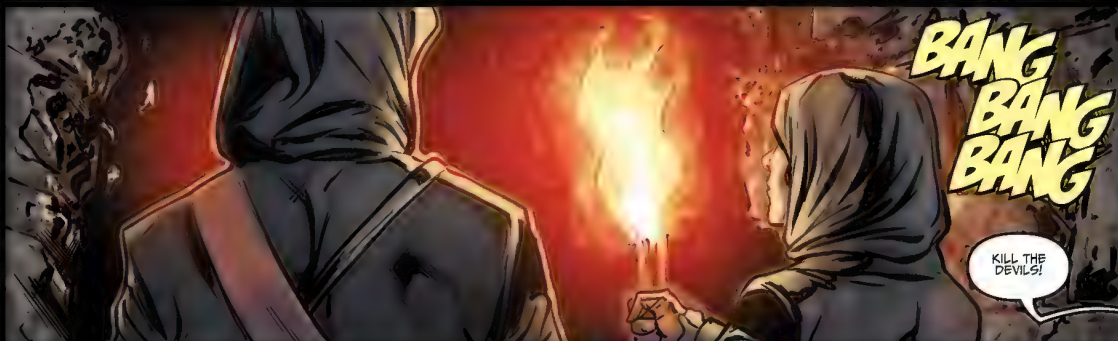
BRING HIM TO ME, AND ALL THOSE THE DEVIL HAS CURSED SHALL BE CURED!

KILL HIM!



KILL THE DEVIL!





San Diego, 2015.

LET GO OF HER!
LET GO, YOU
FREAKIN' BASTARD!

NGGGGHHH!
NGGGGHHH!

KODY,
WHAT'S
GOING
ON?

HER HEART
RATE'S SOARING,
XAVIER. SHE'S NOT
USED TO THIS. BUT...
SHE'S FIGHTING
TO STAY IN.

PEOPLE
ARE ALWAYS SO
SURPRISED TO FIND
OUT WHAT THEIR
ANCESTORS ARE
REALLY LIKE.

THE
GIRL'S GOT
SPIRIT, GALINA.
WE GOTTA GIVE
HER THAT.

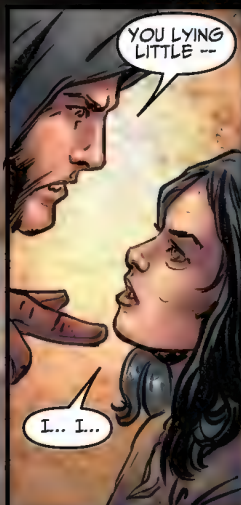
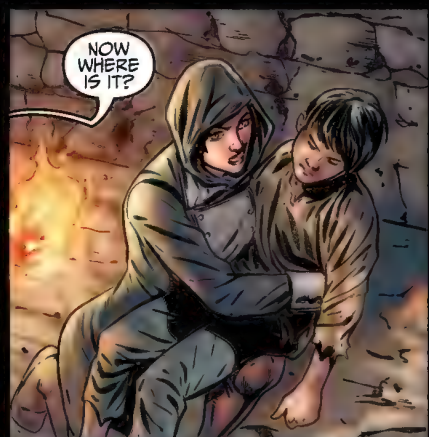
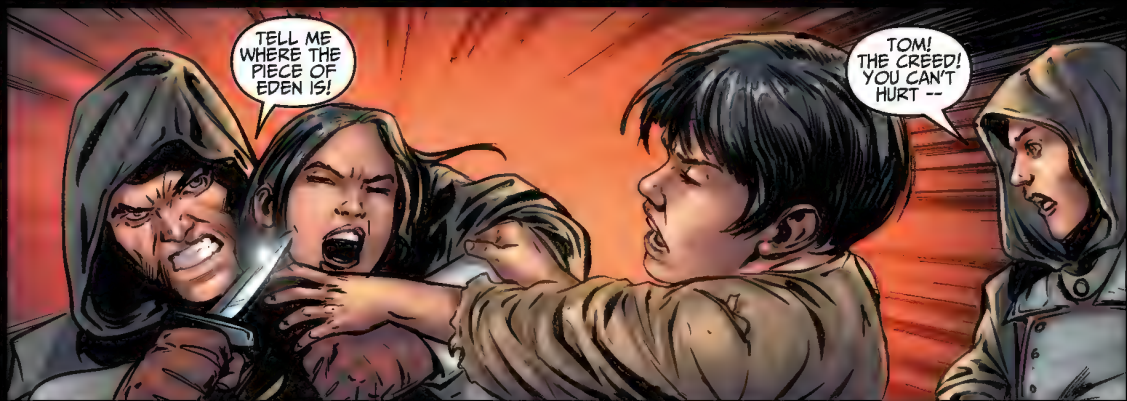
TOM
STODDARD WAS
ONE OF THE MOST
RUTHLESS ASSASSINS
OF HIS TIME.

SHE'LL NEVER
BE WHAT HE WAS,
NOT EVEN CLOSE.
SHE DOESN'T HAVE
IT IN HER.

GOOD!
BUT PEOPLE
CAN SURPRISE
YOU.

NO, THEY
CAN'T.
JOSEPH
IS A PERFECT
EXAMPLE.







SHE IS FALSE.

DOROTHY!



LISTEN TO
YOUR FATHER,
THOMAS...
LISTEN.



CONSIDERATE
LA VOSTRA SEMENZA:
FATTI NON FOSTE A VIVER
COME BRUTI, MA PER
SEGUIR VIRTUTE E
CANOSCEENZA. *

HIS FINAL
WORDS...



NO,
THIS IS NO
PLAYACT!



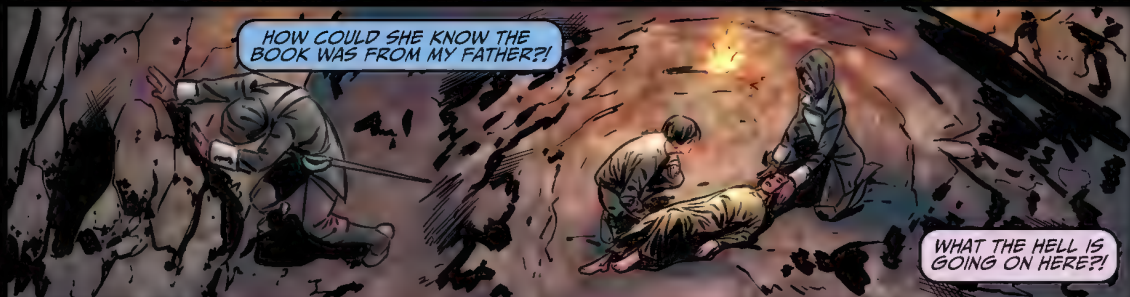
*CONSIDER YOUR ORIGIN...
YOU WERE NOT FORMED
TO LIVE LIKE A BRUTE...
BUT TO FOLLOW VIRTUE
AND KNOWLEDGE.



DOROTHY,
LOOK AT ME.
LOOK AT
ME.

DANTE'S
WORDS...?

HOW...?



HOW COULD SHE KNOW THE
BOOK WAS FROM MY FATHER?!

WHAT THE HELL IS
GOING ON HERE?!



SHE IS
RECOVERED.
SHE'S...

SHE'S
WHAT WE'RE
LOOKING
FOR.



I'VE HEARD
TALES OF PEOPLE
WITH SPECIAL ABILITIES,
POWERS SIMILAR TO...
BUT I'VE NEVER...

WHAT?
TOM?

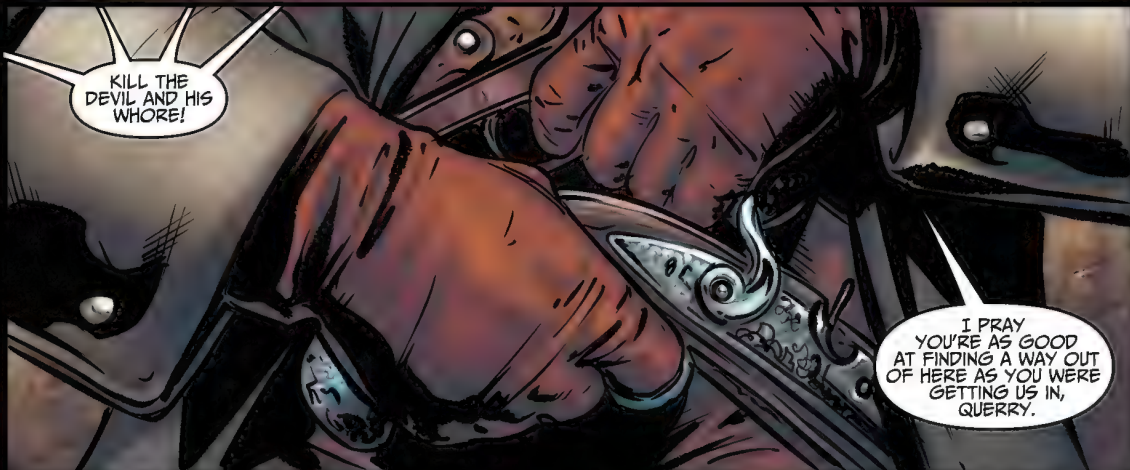


THERE'S
THE DEVIL!

WE'RE NOT
LOOKING FOR
AN OBJECT.
WE'RE LOOKING
FOR HER.

SHE'S OUR
MISSION!

OH MY
GOD, HE'S
RIGHT!



KILL THE
DEVIL AND HIS
WHORE!

I PRAY
YOU'RE AS GOOD
AT FINDING A WAY OUT
OF HERE AS YOU WERE
GETTING US IN,
QUERRY.



KILL
THEM
ALL!

AS
OTHERWISE
YOUR FIRST MISSION
SHALL BECOME
YOUR LAST!

TO BE CONTINUED...

ASSASSIN'S CREED

TRIAL BY FIRE

PART 2 OF 5

+
WRITERS
ANTHONY DEL COL &
CONOR MCCREERY

+
ARTIST
NEIL EDWARDS

LETTERER
RICHARD STARKINGS AND COMICRAFT'S
JIMMY BETANCOURT

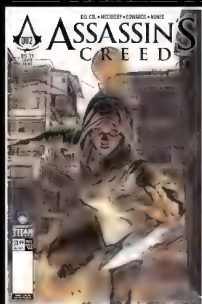
+
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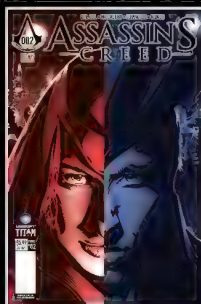
+
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LIZZIE KAYE

+
DESIGNER
ROB FARMER

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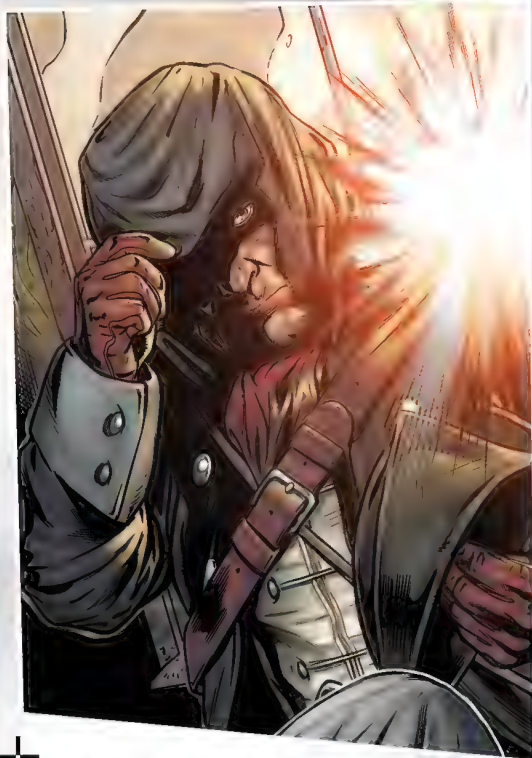
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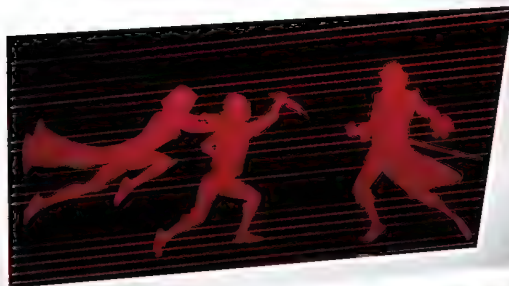
— ON SALE DECEMBER —

ISSUE



INTO THE DEEP...

Charlotte and the Assassin cell have stumbled on a memory that has unsettled their world, and changed everything they thought they knew. As a voice speaks to her across the centuries, Charlotte must learn to accept that her ancestor, Tom Stoddard, is working for the greater good... And Tom must learn to see beyond the problems in front of him, and to value the actions of the truly brave...



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SALEM

IN 1692, A QUIET PURITAN COLONY WAS THE SETTING FOR
DISTURBING EVENTS THAT WOULD ECHO DOWN THE AGES...

In 1626, a small group of Puritans founded the town of Salem on the mouth of the Naumkeag river. They obtained a charter from the British monarchy that gave them the right of free rule so they could practice their Puritan beliefs free from the interference of the Church of England. It was that charter that created the perfect conditions for the horrors to come...

The map of Salem and the surrounding areas, created by W.P. Upnam in 1866, shows the location of the important landmarks and villages of the time and sets the scene for the events that unfolded. It also demonstrates the enduring fascination Salem and the Witch Trials have held for researchers, cartographers, writers and artists down the ages. The Victorian era produced much of the research and data that informs historians today.

While the name "Salem" is mostly associated with the Witch Trials, it actually refers to both Salem Village (now called Danvers) and Salem Town. The first accusations of witchcraft were made in Salem Village, but the courts, and therefore the trials, were held in nearby Salem Town. However, the accused came from all over Essex County. In fact, the vast majority of the accused were from the nearby village of Andover, Ipswich, Beverly, Haverhill, Topsfield and Gloucester, among others.

These towns were in the midst of economic and social upheaval in 1692, but the beginning of the tragedy that was the Witch Trials could conceivably be traced back to the arrival in Salem Village of one Samuel Parris. A former plantation owner from Barbados, and secretly a member of the Templar Order, Parris accepted the position of Village Minister and arrived with his wife, Elizabeth, his daughter Betty, his niece Abigail Williams, and the house slave, Tituba.

According to historians, it was the actions of Betty and Abigail that would lead to the deaths of nineteen people...

TO BE CONTINUED...



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COVER C

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GOULDING/MURRAY



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MRG
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EMPIRE